

AS A. T. BURCH SEES IT

Cuba Flop Bigger Blot

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Big Question: What's Kennedy's Next Step?

REPUBLICAN party leaders have been remarkably restrained in their comments on last week's fiasco, for which President Kennedy admits to a large share of personal responsibility.

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Republicans are not strongly tempted to exploit their country's humiliation politically. And the "fiasco" is so close to a diplomatic disaster that everybody's impulse is to unite in silent prayer for better international weather.

Exactly what the United States did is still not clear. But the President publicly assumed large, if vague, responsibility for the preparation and timing of the ill-fated invasion attempt by anti-Castro Cubans. Quite properly, he does not blame the persons whose advice he followed. The decision to follow their advice, against the objections of others, was his.

The Cuban flop was far more damaging to the prestige of the United States and its interests than the loss of one U-2 reconnaissance plane over Russia not quite a year ago.

In fact, that incident was reassuring in one respect. Statements that followed, even from Soviet official sources, revealed that the United States had made many previous flights over Russia with the loss of only one plane.

It became evident that manned American aircraft could still be formidable weapons.

SOME LEADING Democrats felt a patriotic obligation then not to play politics with the difficulties the U-2 incident created. Vice President Lyndon Johnson, then a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, was one of them.

Others, however, made it the occasion for attacking the administration. Adlai Stevenson, now ambassador to the United Nations, was one of

them. Then Senator and now President, said he would have expressed official regrets to Russia that we had invaded Russian air space.

European allies knew that these flights had been taking place and had approved them.

At the Los Angeles convention, innumerable Democrats went all out in denouncing the administration then in power because this one U-2 flight had failed.

The fact was that the leading statesmen among all our nations. Nevertheless, the U-2 incident did real damage to the United States since Russian threats of retaliation fortified the reluctance of small countries to supply military bases.

THE U-2 incident, however, was a bagatelle in its damage compared with the Cuban fiasco.



Disillusioned rebels captured by the Cuban flop was damaging to

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In most comment, the significance of Cuba has been minimized, out of an instinctive feeling that the predicament is too horrible to look at plainly.

Our principal allies appear to have been surprised by the event itself.

But they were equally surprised and much more alarmed by President Kennedy's declaration that the United States may have to take independent military action in Cuba without regard to the wishes of the United Nations or even of the Organization of American States.

Allies Oppose Preventive War

Our allies are opposed in principle to a preventive war waged by the United

States as strongly as former President Eisenhower was opposed to the "preventive war" undertaken by Great Britain and France against Egypt.

It remains true, as The Daily News said at that time, that today's world is too explosive to justify any preventive wars.

EVERY NATION, these days, is seriously endangered by some other nation or nations. If it is morally justifiable to make any surprise attack to forestall future danger, it would be justifiable for the United States to obliterate the principal Russian cities before midnight tonight.

It would be equally justifiable for the Russians to obliterate the principal American States as they can. For each